

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PRAGUE 01133 031433Z
ACTION EUR-12

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AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
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AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
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AMEMBASSY SOFIA
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USLO PEKING

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E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PROP
SUBJECT: SOVIETS DEFENSIVE AT PRAGUE MEETING ON "PROBLEMS OF PEACE
AND SOCIALISM

REF MOSCOW 5852

1. SUMMARY: IN OUR VIEW, SOVIETS WOULD SEEM TO HAVE LITTLE TO
CHEER ABOUT IN WAKE OF THE APRIL 27-29 MEETING AT PRAGUE ON
"PROBLEMS OF PEACE AND SOCIALISM." MOSCOW WAS ABLE TO MUSTER
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PAGE 02 PRAGUE 01133 031433Z

DELEGATIONS FROM 75 PARTIES BUT THE ABSENCE OF SOME MAJOR ONES,
INCLUDING THE CHINESE, YUGOSLAVS, AND VIETNAMESE, REFLECT CONTINUING
SUBSTANTIAL RESISTANCE TO FOLLOWING THE SOVIET LEAD. SUCH RESISTANCE
WAS FURTHER REFLECTED AT THE MEETING INTER ALIA BY THE RELATIVELY
LOW-LEVEL PARTICIPATION OF ROMANIANS AND PRINCIPAL "EURO-COMMUNIST"
PARTIES. WHILE WE SEE NO EVIDENCE THAT CPSU SECRETARY PONOMAREV
WAS ABLE TO STRENGTHEN MOSCOW'S INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP ROLE

THROUGH DISCUSSIONS HERE, NO DOUBT THE SOVIETS VALUED THE MEETING AS A FOLLOW-UP TO THE IDEOLOGICAL TALKS WITH THEIR CLOSEST ALLIES AT SOFIA IN MARCH AND AS ANOTHER STEPPING STONE TOWARD BELGRADE 77--AND PERHAPS OTHER FUTURE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST CONFERENCES. END SUMMARY.

2. THE PRAGUE MEETING OF SEVENTY-FIVE DELEGATIONS OF MARXIST-LENINIST PARTIES TO DISCUSS IDEOLOGICAL JOURNAL "PROBLEMS OF PEACE AND SOCIALISM," ACCORDING TO SWEDISH JOURNALIST WHO KNOWS A SWEDISH DELEGATE, INVOLVED AN ATTEMPT BY WARSAW PACT ALLIES TO MAGNIFY IMPORTANCE OF EVENT AND DEFEND STRICTLY PRO-SOVIET EDITORIAL POSITION OF THE JOURNAL, WHEREAS REPRESENTATIVES OF EURO-COMMUNIST AND OTHER INDEPENDENT MINDED PARTIES PRESSED FOR MORE OPEN EDITORIAL POLICY AND RESISTED SOVIET ATTEMPTS TO ELEVATE WORKING CONFERENCE INTO HIGH-LEVEL SHOW OF SOLIDARITY.

3. ACCORDING TO OUR SOURCE, WARSAW PACT ALLIES TRIED TO ELICIT HIGH-LEVEL PARTICIPATION--I.E. SECRETARIES GENERAL OR PRESIDUM MEMBERS, BUT KEY WESTERN PARTIES PREFERRED TO KEEP REPRESENTATION AT THE WORKING LEVEL. THE ITALIAN, FRENCH, AND SPANISH PARTIES--TOGETHER WITH THE ROMANIANS--SENT ONLY CENTRAL COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES. THE BRITISH, WHO HAVE STRONGLY CRITICIZED CZECHOSLOVAKIA'S HUMAN RIGHTS POLICIES, SENT ONLY A PARTY MEMBER. THE SOVIETS CLOSEST ALLIES WERE REPRESENTED AT PRESIDUM MEMBER LEVEL WHILE ONLY VERY SMALL PARTIES SENT THEIR SECRETARIES GENERAL. NOTABLY, THE CHINESE, ALBANIANS, YUGOSLAVS, VIETNAMESE AND NORTH KOREANS DECLINED TO PARTICIPATE AT ANY LEVEL.

4. DISCUSSIONS ACTUALLY DID REVOLVE AROUND QUESTIONS OF EDITORIAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 PRAGUE 01133 031433Z

POLICY, WITH WESTERN DELEGATES TRYING TO OPEN THE JOURNAL UP TO A WIDER RANGE OF OPINION THAN HAS BEEN THE RULE AND RESISTING SOVIET PRESSURES FOR SOLIDARITY. EVENING SESSION APRIL 28 IS SAID TO HAVE INCLUDED A HEATED DISCUSSION BETWEEN MOSCOW'S CLOSEST ALLIES AND WESTERN AND THIRD WORLD DELEGATES, LED BY FRENCH AND INDIANS. THE SOVIETS REPORTEDLY PRESSED FOR PASSAGE OF A RESOLUTION EMPHASIZING SOLIDARITY, BUT THE FRENCH AND OTHERS RESISTED UNTIL SOVIETS DROPPED THE IDEA.

5. PONOMAREV'S APRIL 27 SPEECH REPORTED REFTEL WAS--FOR SOME REASON--

- NOT CARRIED BY CZECHOSLOVAK PRESS, BUT AN ACCOUNT PRINTED IN APRIL 29 RUDE PRAVO SUMMARIZES PONOMAREV STATEMENT THAT WE THINK MUST HAVE BEEN VERY SIMILAR BUT WAS REPORTEDLY DELIVERED APRIL 28. IN ADDITION TO LASHING OUT VEHEMENTLY AT THE WEST ON HUMAN RIGHTS, PONOMAREV SUGGESTS IMPERIALISTS HAVE ATTEMPTED TO "RUSSIFY" THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION, THAT IS, TO ASSERT THAT IT TOOK PLACE UNDER SPECIFIC RUSSIAN CONDITIONS AND DOES NOT HAVE INTERNATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE--A SLAT NOT ONLY AT IMPERIALISTS, BUT MORE SIGNIFICANTLY,

AT EURO-COMMUNIST AND OTHER OPPONENTS OF "PROLETARIAN
INTERNATIONALISM."

6. FRENCH EMBASSY TELLS US SOVIETS ALSO USED THE TALKS TO STEER
THE PUBLICATION TOWARD GREATER ATTENTION TO THE PROGRESS OF
SOCIALIST REGIMES, LIKE ANGOLA, IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD.

7. CZECHOSLOVAK IDEOLOGIST VASIL BILAK, EQUATED ANTI-COMMUNISM
WITH ANTI-SOVIETISM AND STAUNCHLY DEFENDED THE "INTERNATIONAL AID OF
THE FRATERNAL SOCIALIST COUNTRIES" TO CZECHOSLOVAKIA IN 1968.
BILAK CHARGED THAT "ANTI-COMMUNIST CENTERS" AND "REMNANTS OF
ANTI-SOCIALIST ELEMNTS AT HOME" ARE ALREADY PREPARING CAMPAIGNS
IN CONNECTION WITH THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF 1968. WITHOUT DENYING
THAT "PROBLEMS OF PEACE AND SOCIALISM" COULD STAND SOME IMPROVEMENT,
BILAK PRAISED ITS PRESENT EDITORIAL POLICY AND CALLED FOR RENEWED
EFFORTS IN VIEW OF HEIGHTENED ATTACKS FROM "IMPERIALST CENTERS."

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8. EMBASSY PREPARING TRANSLATION OF FINAL COMMUNIQUE AND WILL
POUCH TO EUR/EE.
BYRNE

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